

Message Text

SECRET POSS DUPE

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64

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

ACDA-19 IO-14 IGA-02 AID-20 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01

/155 W

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R 171135Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6260

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

USSAG NKP

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 7146

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER

1. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY STEARNS AND I MET WITH PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA THIS MORNING. STEARNS GAVE SOUVANNA A QUICK RUNDOWN ON THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM, STRESSING THE FRAGILITY OF THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE CONTINUING HIGH LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IN VIETNAM. HE DESCRIBED TO SOUVANNA THE INTENSE ENGINEER EFFORT MADE BY THE NVA ON THE TRAIL SYSTEM AND IN SOUTH VIETNAM THIS YEAR, BUT NOTED THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO FORETELL WHETHER THE NVA PLANNED A MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN THE COMING DRY SEASON. THERE WERE IN FACT SOME INDICATIONS THAT ISSUE WAS CURRENTLY UNDER DISCUSSION IN HANOI.

2. TURNING TO THE SITUATION IN WASHINGTON, STEARNS

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DESCRIBED CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

FOLLOWING UP ON THIS EMBASSY'S EARLIER TALK WITH SOUVANNA (VIENTIANE 5769 NOTAL), HE DISCUSSED WITH SOUVANNA THE LEGAL BASIS FOR CONTINUING U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RECENTLY SIGNED PROTOCOL AND THE 1962 GENEVA ACCORDS. SOUVANNA STATED THAT HE FORESAW NO PROBLEM FOR RLG WITH REGARD TO RECEIVING CONTINUED U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE. HE COMMENTED THAT HE HAD ALREADY SENT THE EMBASSY A LETTER CONFIRMING HIS DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THIS ASSISTANCE IN THE FUTURE. HE SEEMED SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT NO SUCH LETTER HAD BEEN RECEIVED AND SAID HE WOULD CHECK. STEARNS SAID LETTER WOULD BE HELPFUL IN OUR CONTINUING CONSIDERATION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

3. SOUVANNA EXPLAINED TO STEARNS THAT HE CONTINUED TO HOPE THAT RECONCILIATION WITH THE OTHER SIDE WAS FEASIBLE. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED TO THE TONE OF THE RELATIONSHIP NOW BEING ESTABLISHED AND HIS DESIRE TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE, RECOGNIZING THE VERY REAL MISTRUST AND APPREHENSION WHICH EXISTED ON BOTH SIDES. SOUVANNA SAID THAT ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE JCIA WERE PROVING TO BE A HEAVY FINANCIAL BURDEN AND HE HAD SEVERAL TIMES REQUESTED U.S. ASSISTANCE TO HELP HIM THROUGH THIS FINANCIAL PROBLEM. WHEN WE NOTED THE DESIRABILITY OF REQUESTING ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, SOUVANNA STATED THAT HE HAD ALREADY APPROACHED POMPIDOU AND WOULD CONTACT THE SOVIETS AS SOON AS THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR RETURNS. HE WAS ALSO GOING TO SOLICIT CHINESE HELP.

4. SOUVANNA INQUIRED WHETHER SURPLUS U.S. VEHICLES IN THAILAND COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO HIM FOR JCIA USE. I STATED THAT THERE WERE FEW, IF ANY, VEHICLES IN THAILAND BUT THAT WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO HELP REPAIR SOME OF THE MANY FAR VEHICLES WHICH ARE CURRENTLY DEADLINED AND WHICH SHOULD BE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO MEET HIS NEEDS. SOUVANNA APPEARED TO BE SATISFIED WITH THIS SOLUTION BUT HE IS CLEARLY VERY CONCERNED OVER THE UNFORESEEN BUDGETARY COST OF HIS PRESENT POLITICAL EFFORT.

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TM SOUVANNA WAS CLEARLY DELIGHTED TO SEE STEARNS AGAIN AND THIS VISIT HAS PROVED TO BE MOST TIMELY AND HELPFUL TO US.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973VIENTI07146
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS WHITEHOUSE
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731025/aaaaasnt.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26-Nov-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <27-Nov-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, LA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005